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Chatterjee

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(54) **MODIFICATION OF TERMINAL AND SERVICE PROVIDER MACHINES USING AN UPDATE SERVER MACHINE**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
G06F 9/44 (2006.01)
G06F 9/445 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **717/124**; 717/107; 717/115; 717/174

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
None
See application file for complete search history.

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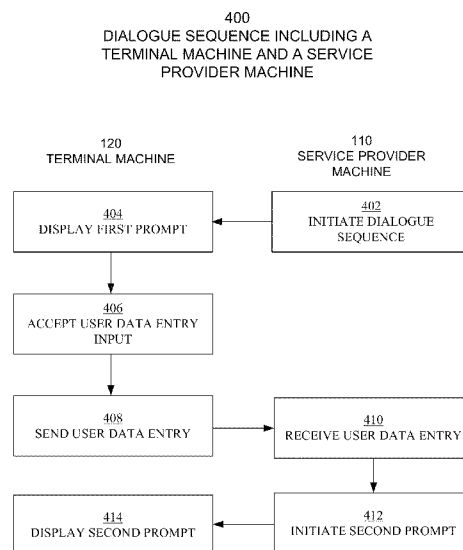
Primary Examiner — Thuy Dao

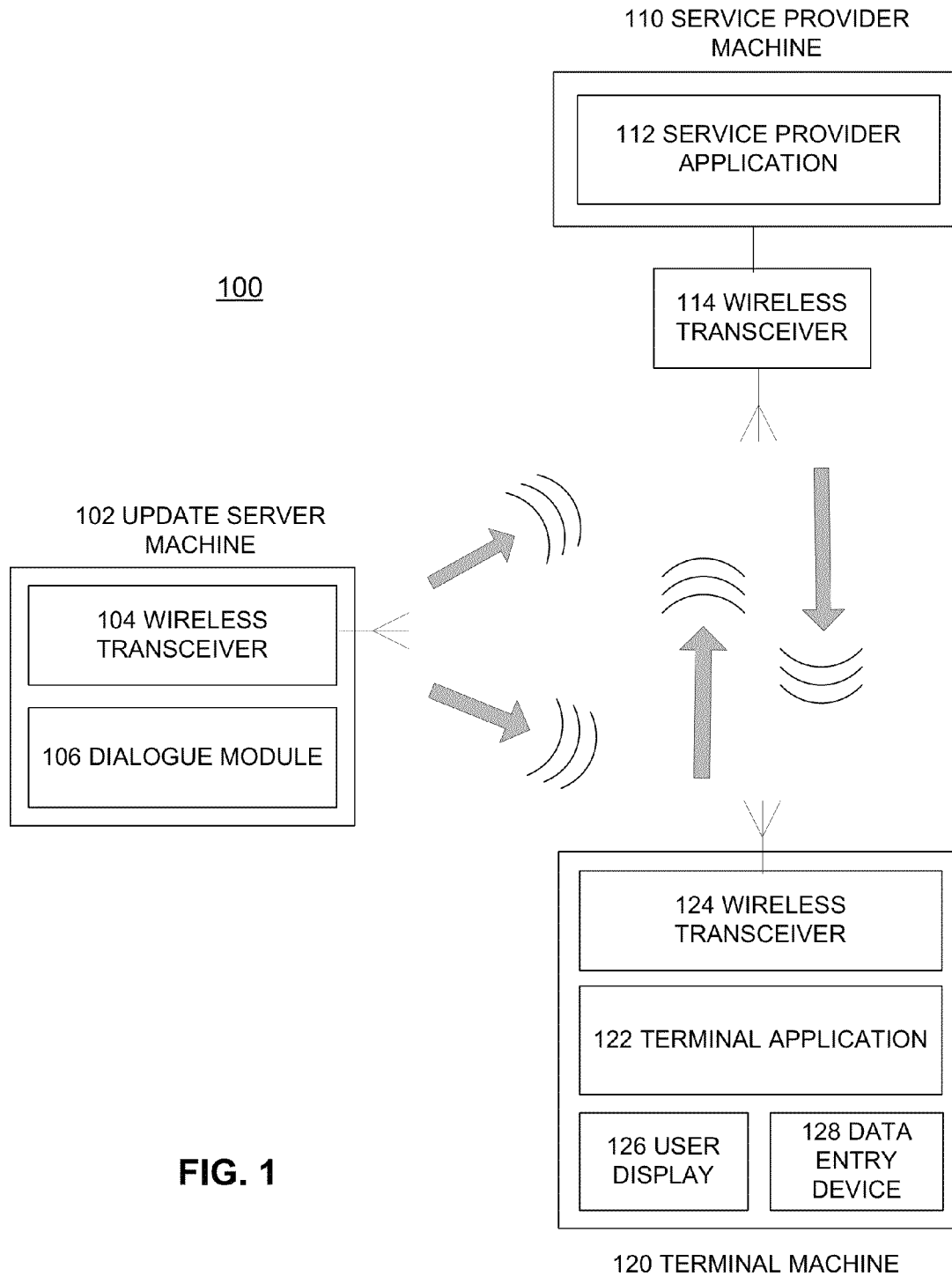
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A system including a terminal machine and a service provider machine is modified using a service provider machine. The terminal machine includes a terminal application for displaying a prompt in a first sequence of prompts and accepting a user data entry in a first series of data entries. The service provider machine includes a provider application for receiving the user data entry. The update server machine sends a dialogue module including a first and second set of updated code to the terminal machine and the service provider machine, respectively. The dialogue module does not modify computer-executable instructions saved on the terminal or service provider machines. The first and second set of updated code adapts the terminal application and provider application, respectively, to use a second sequence of prompts and a second sequence of data entries.

31 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets





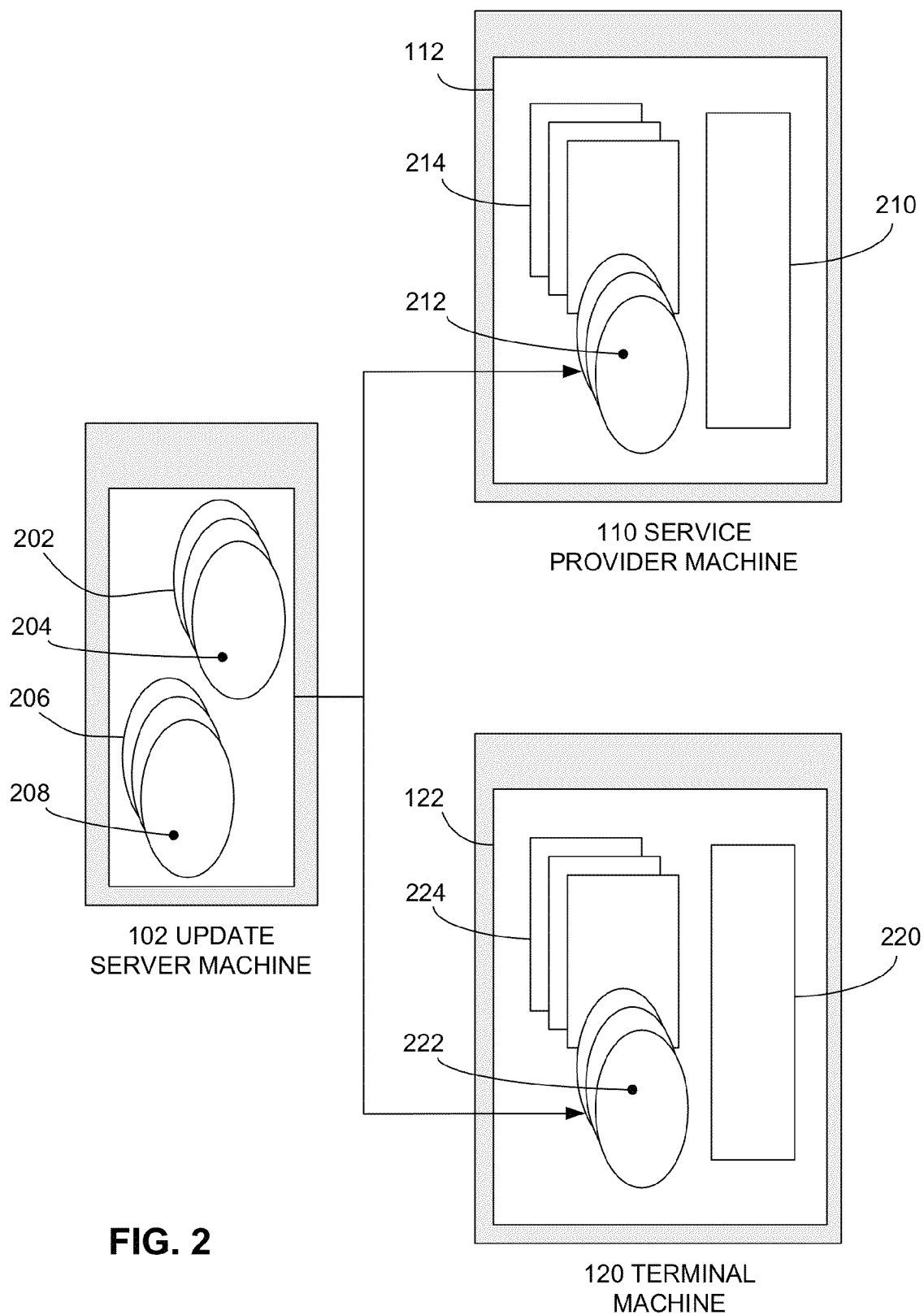


FIG. 2

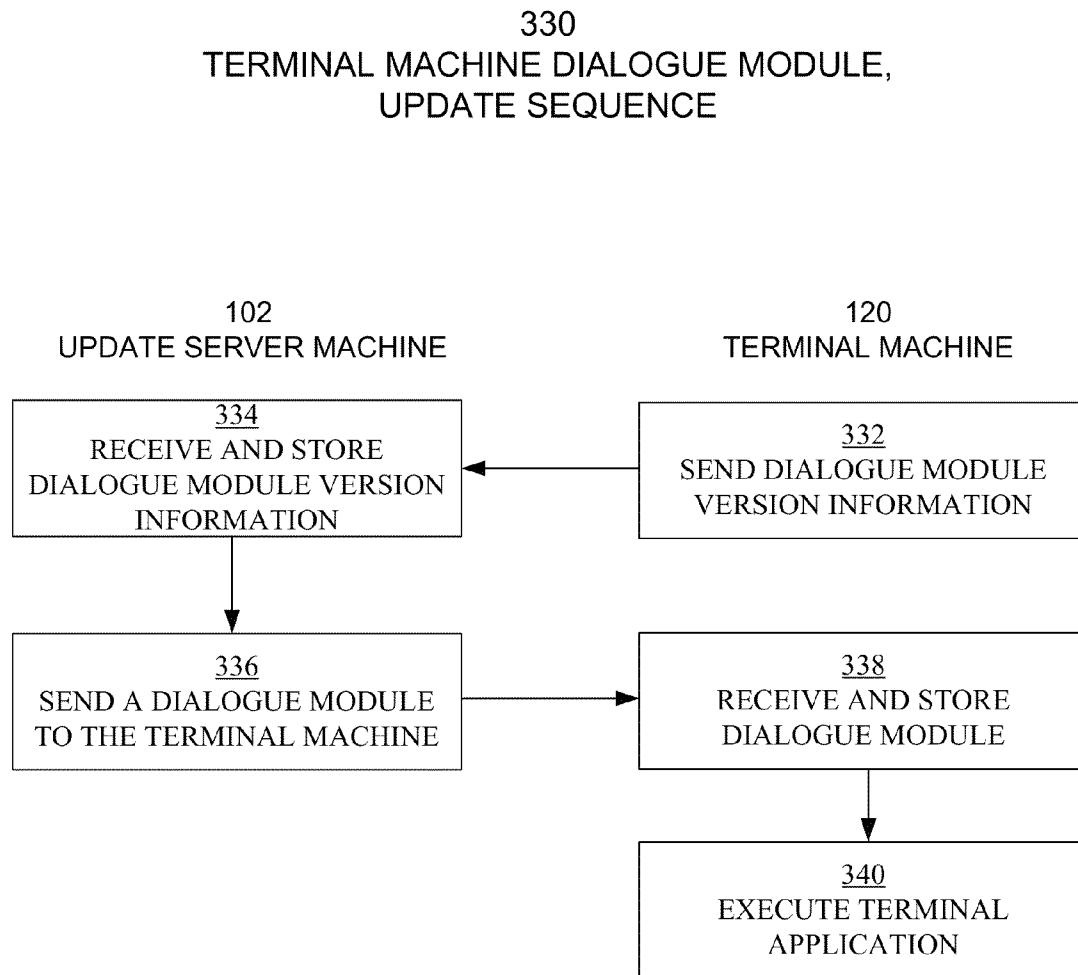


FIG. 3A

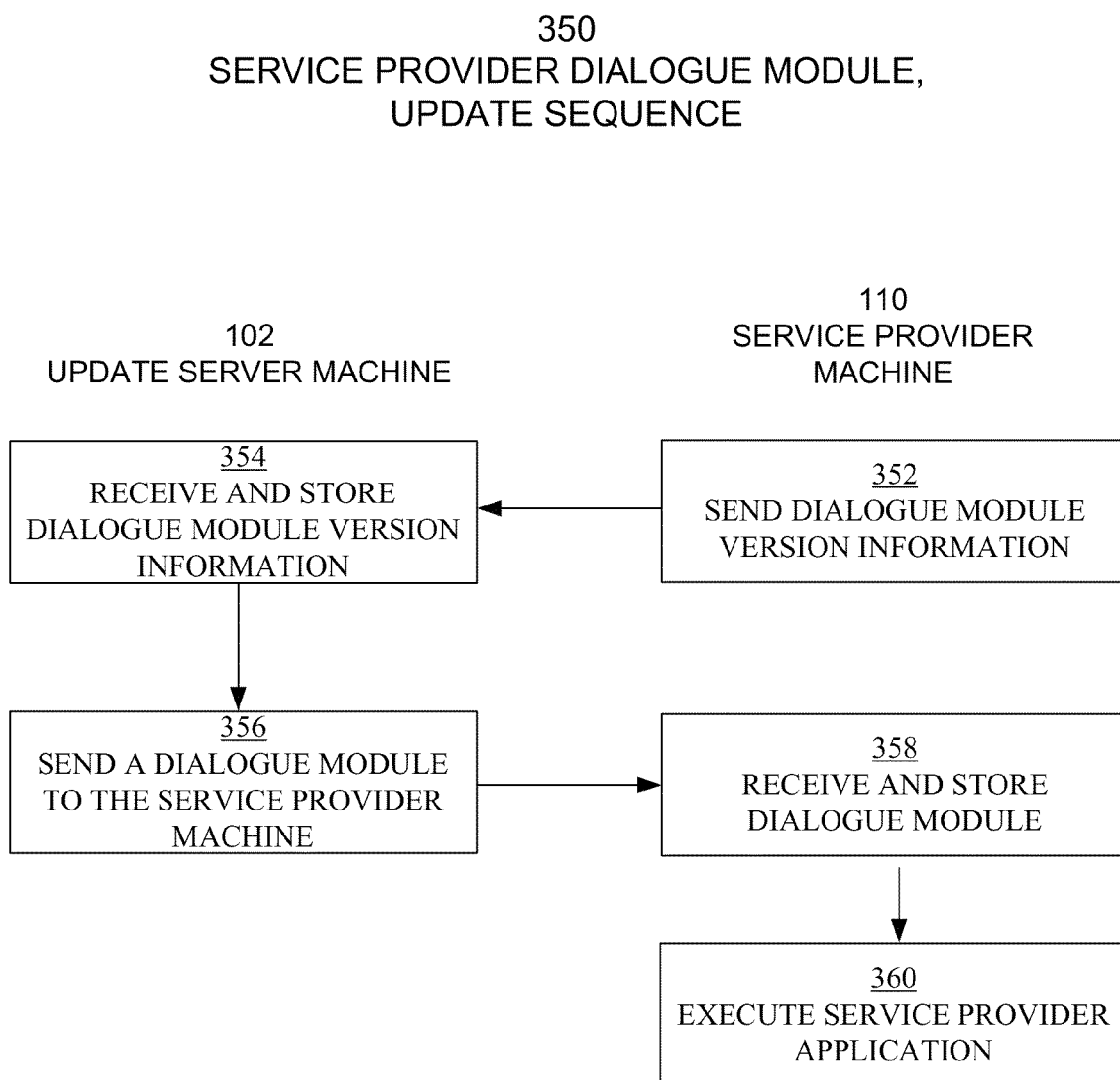


FIG. 3B

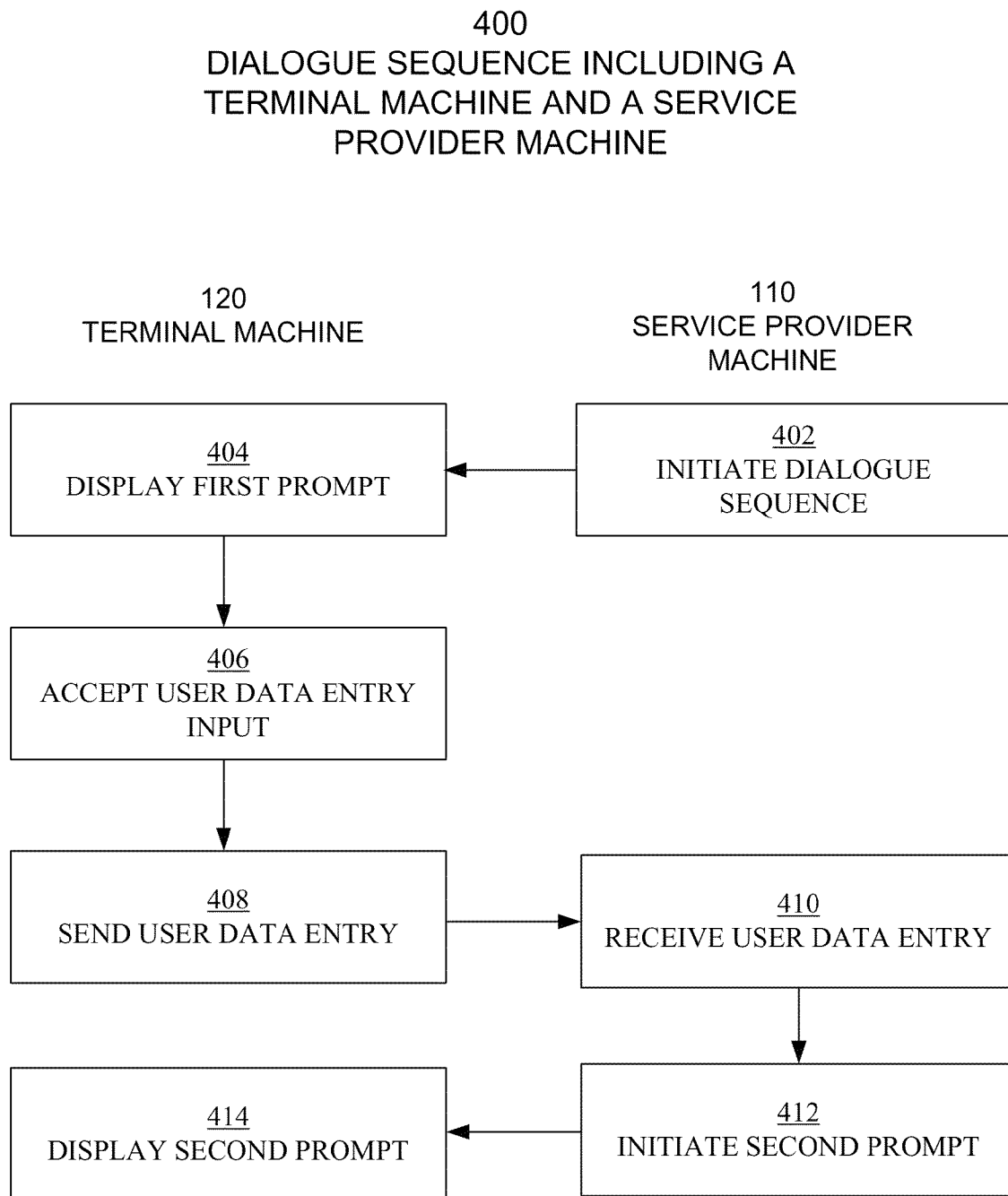


FIG. 4A

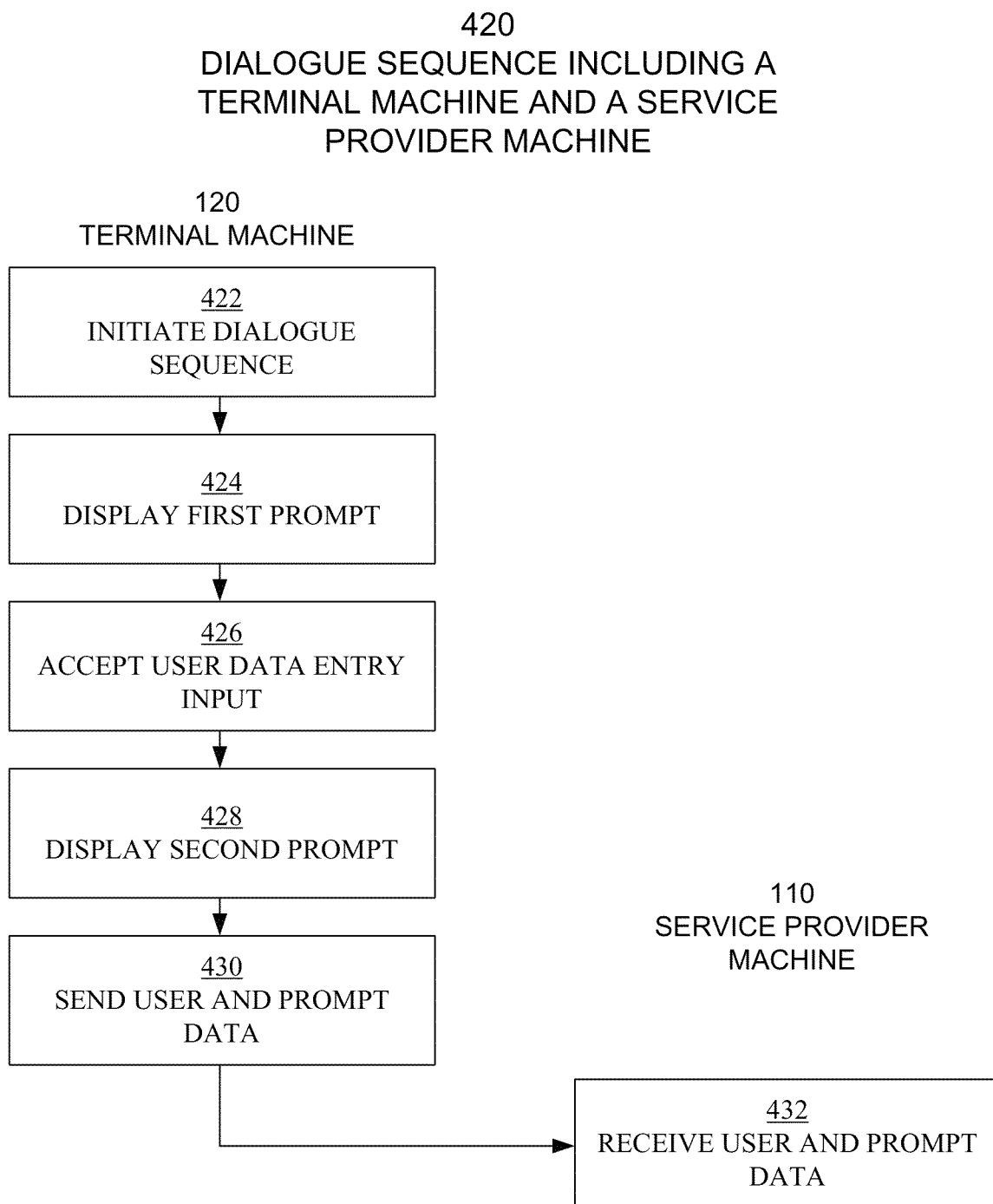
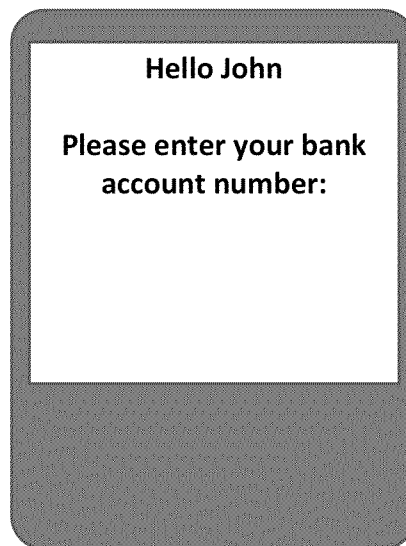
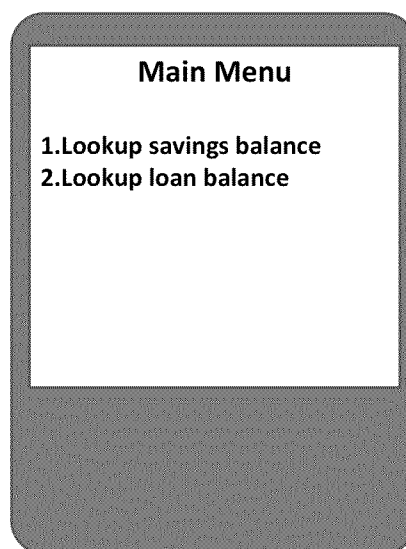
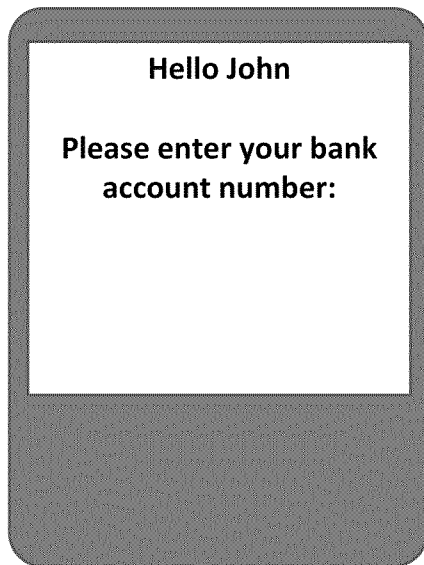
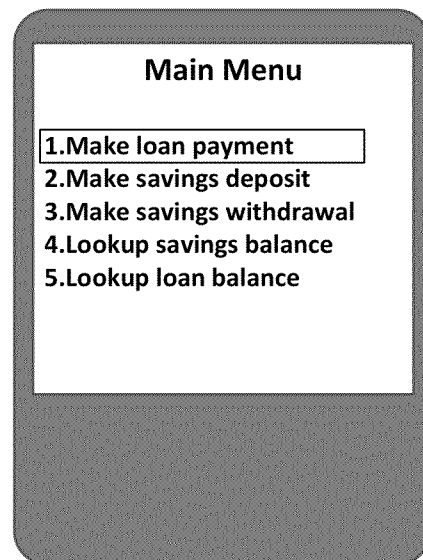
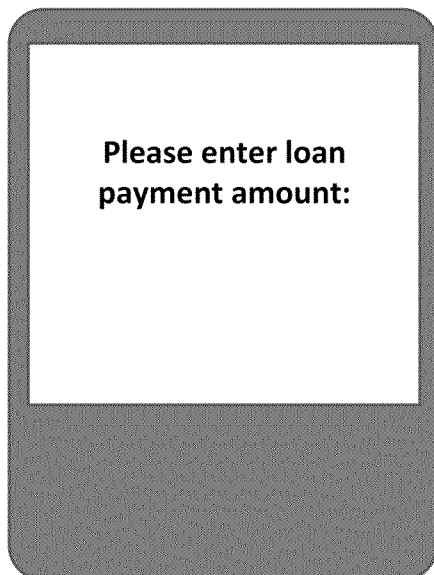


FIG. 4B

**FIG. 5A****FIG. 5B**

**FIG. 6A****FIG. 6B****FIG. 6C**

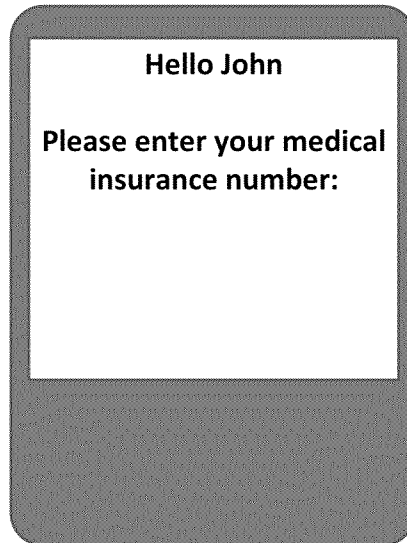


FIG. 7A

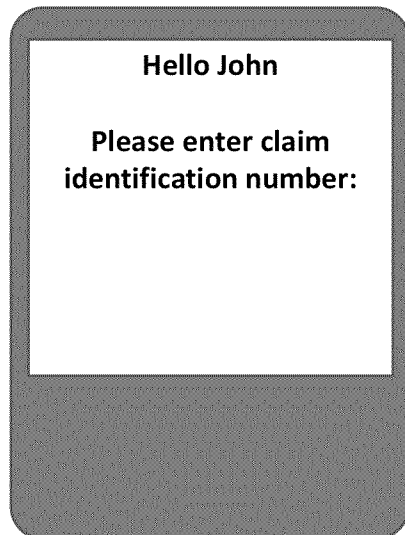


FIG. 7B

Logged In As: **admin (AdministratorsName, Administrator)** [Log Off](#)

Project Name: **DemonstrationScreens**

Security Level: **Design and Flows**

Runtime Version: **v2.1.36**

Handset Type: **LNPS0**

Description: **Point-of-Sale (PoS) Terminal with 8x14 display, alphanumeric data entry, smart card reader, and magnetic swipe card reader.**

Language Support: **English, Spanish**

Project Management (Save Project or Submit Project for Processing)

⏮ Prev Screen

⏭ Next Screen

Save Project

 |

Submit Project for Processing

Screen: 1 of 6

Title : WelcomeScreen

Screen Design (Design each screen exactly as you would like it to appear)

	Language ID: English	Language ID: Spanish
1	Welcome to the	Recepción al
2	eServices Everywhere	eServices por todas partes
3	Mobile Designer Extreme	Extremo Móvil Del Diseñador
4		
5		
6		
7		
8	Press ENTER to continue	Presione ENTRAR para continuar
9		

FIG. 8A

Screen Flows (Select the keys and the destination screen of the user pressing that key)					
1 to	0	2 to	0	3 to	0
4 to	0	5 to	0	6 to	0
7 to	0	8 to	0	9 to	0
0 to	0	FUNC to	0	ALPHA to	0
		ENTER to	2		

Data Entry Screen (Check which type of data can be entered on this screen.)

☒ None ☐ Alpha Only ☐ Numeric Only ☐ Alphanumeric
☐ Smart Card ☐ Magnetic Swipe Card ☐ Touchscreen

Data Entry Validation (Specify the rules and validation on the entered data.)

Handler Name: MappingForCostaRicaDi

Notes: (Enter any notes or special handling instructions)

MappingForcostaRicaDistricts:

FIG. 8B

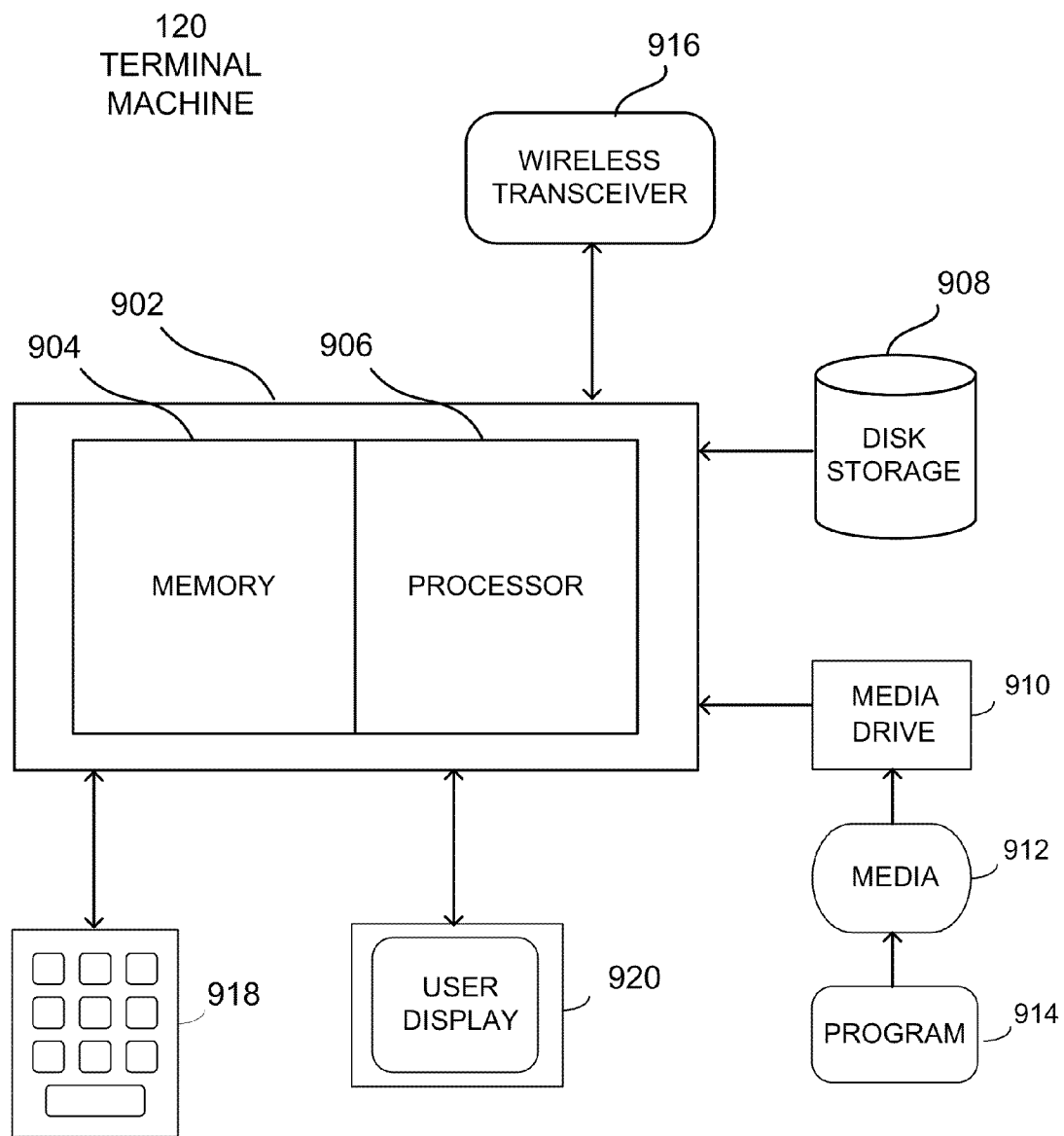


FIG. 9

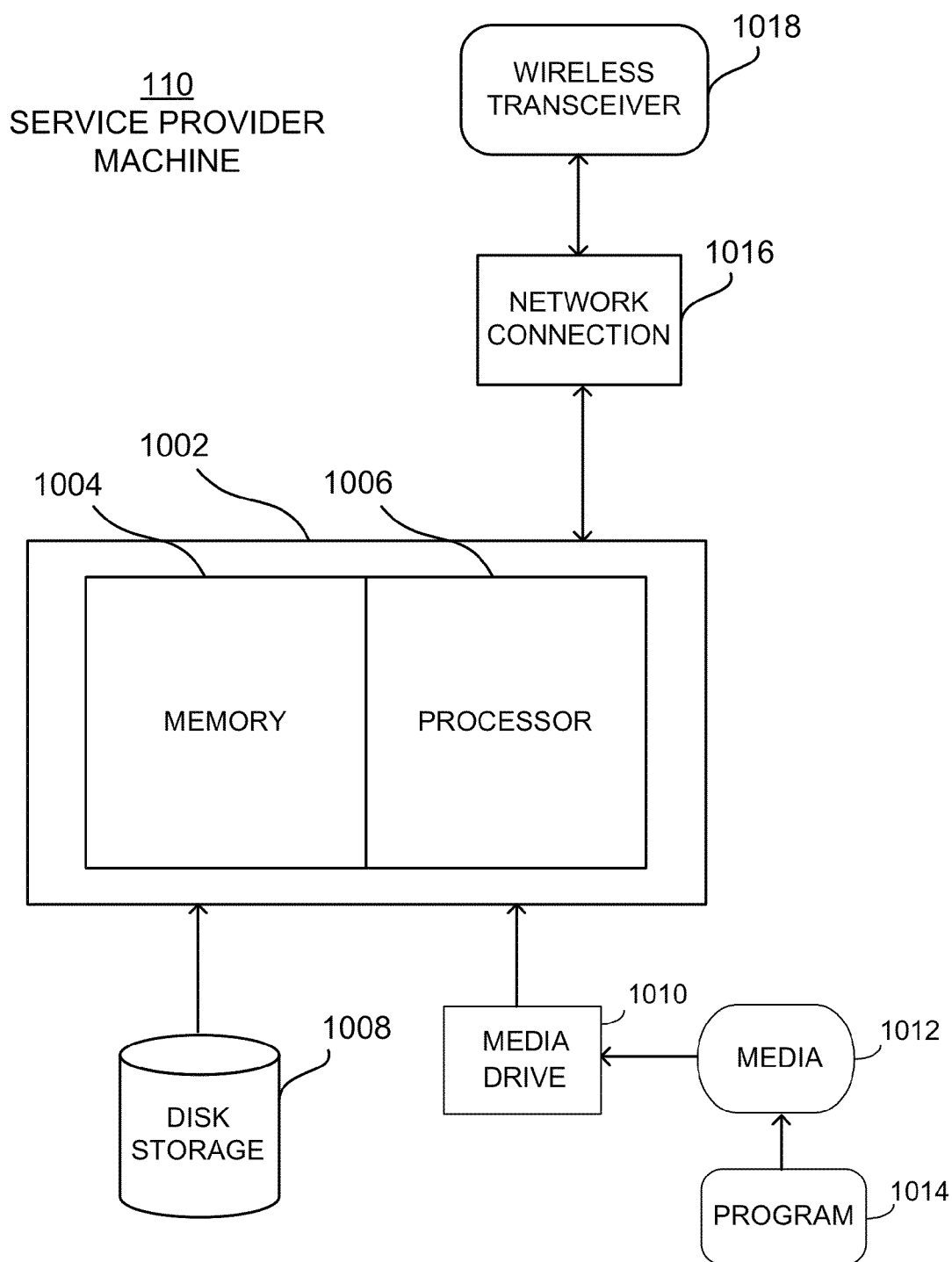
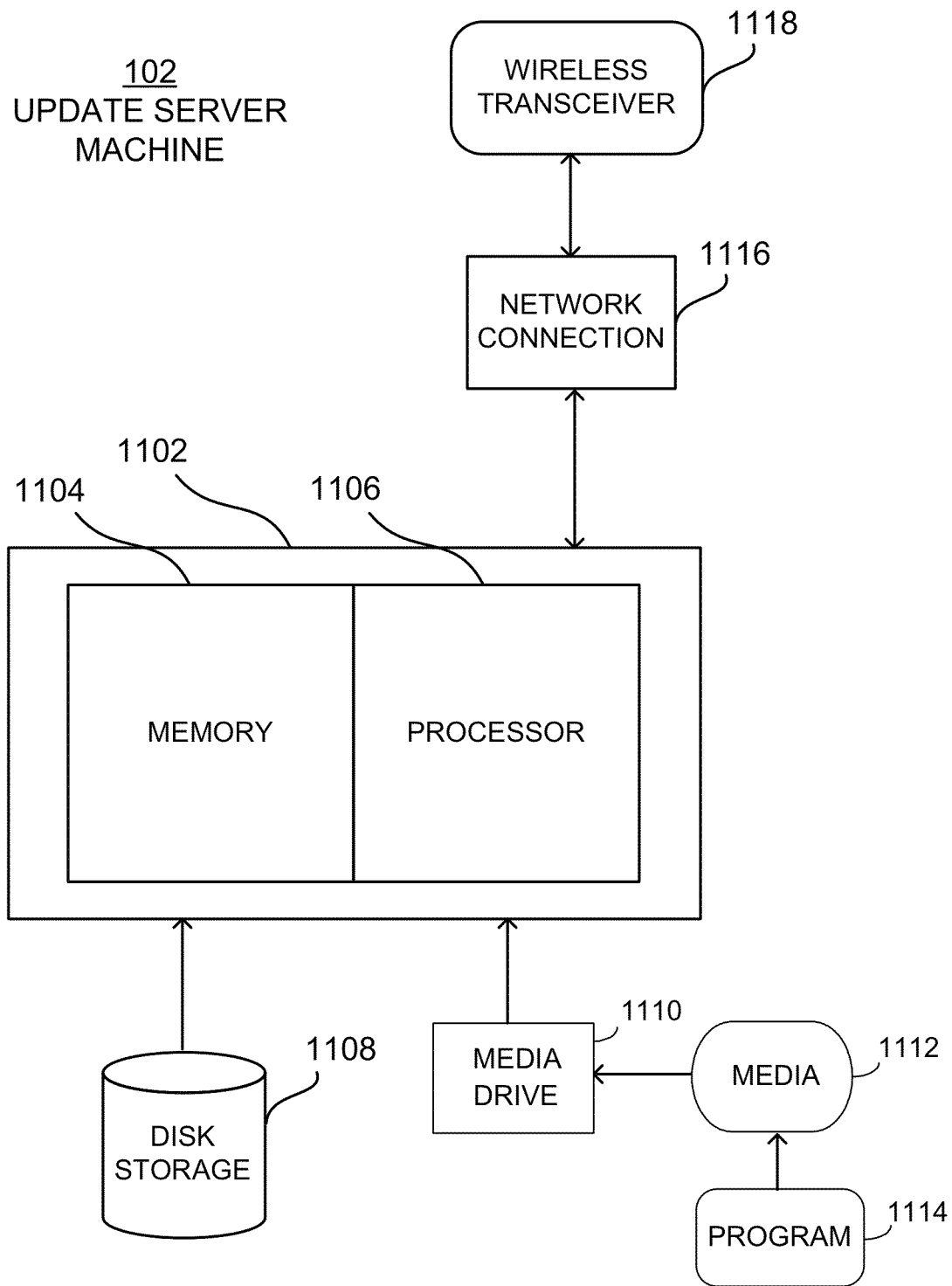
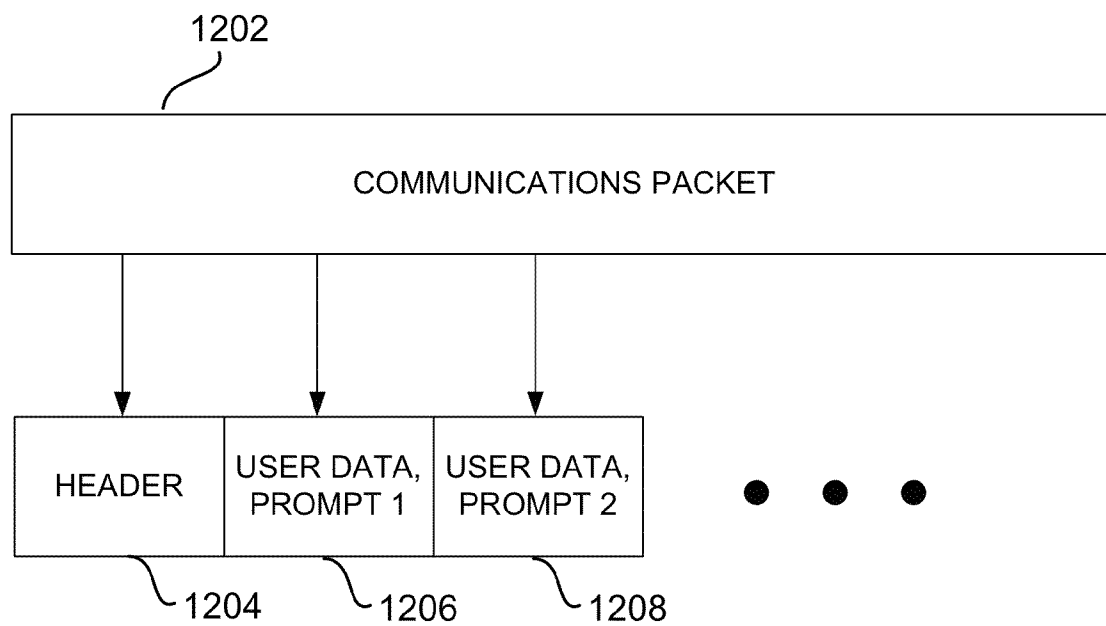


FIG. 10

**FIG. 11**

**FIG. 12**

MODIFICATION OF TERMINAL AND SERVICE PROVIDER MACHINES USING AN UPDATE SERVER MACHINE

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit under 35 USC 119(e) of prior U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/228,140, filed Jul. 23, 2009, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/325,212, filed Apr. 16, 2010, the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated by reference in their entireties.

BACKGROUND

1. Field

This application relates generally to a computerized system to provide efficient modification of remote software and, more specifically, to adaptation and customization of a computer transaction dialogue module.

2. Description of the Related Art

It is well known to those of skill in the art that computerized systems can be adapted to perform specific functionality by implementing software code. For example, the software code may be written in languages such as C, C++, or Java.

A computerized system may be constructed, which includes electronic hardware, one or more computer processors, and software, which is able to perform system functionality. Typically, the software is written or created as source code and later compiled or converted into computer-executable instructions able to be read and executed by a computer processor without additional translation or adaptation. For example, the source code may be written in languages such as C, C++, or Java. Computer-executable instructions are sometimes also referred to as executable code or machine code.

For example, the computer-executable instructions may be compiled for and executed on a specific computer processor, such as the Intel Pentium processor from Intel Corporation, or may be used to modify the functionality of a Programmable Gate Array (PGA) or Field Programmable Gate Array (FPGA), such as those provided by Xilinx Corporation. In most cases, computer-executable code is specific to one type of processor or logical device.

Virtual machines can be used to provide a method of executing code on a computer system that is not dependent on a specific processor or hardware configuration. When using a virtual machine, a portion of code (typically in the form of source code) is compiled or translated into intermediary code, such as Java Byte Code. The intermediary code is then able to be further translated using the virtual machine, which itself is run on a computer processor (and perhaps also an operating system). Thus, a virtual machine is able to emulate a standardized computer platform that is independent of the actual computer processor or hardware configuration.

A computerized system, in the context of the embodiments described herein, includes more than one hardware device, each hardware device running a separate software application. Each software application comprises, in part, computer-executable instructions that allow the associated hardware device to interact with a user and communicate with another hardware device over a distributed network. For example, the software application may be adapted to interact directly with a user of the hardware device by accepting user input. The software application may be further adapted to communicate the user input to another hardware device using a network connection.

Often times, after a computerized system has been initially constructed, modifications may be required, either to improve the functionality of the system or to customize the system to meet new requirements. In some cases, these modifications require changes to the software application stored on each system device.

Typically, a software application includes computer-executable instructions that are not able to be edited or modified directly by a developer. Using known methods, the developer may only implement the required changes by creating or editing source code. The updated source code must then be recompiled or translated into an updated set of computer-executable instructions and distributed to the hardware devices in the system as an updated software application. Typically, the updated set of computer-executable instructions that comprises an updated software application includes a relatively large amount of information.

However, in many situations, it may be difficult to distribute a newly compiled version of the updated software application to all of the devices in the system. This is particularly true if the system is distributed over a large geographic area. For example, it may be difficult to locate each system device and transport it to a central location or development center. Because physical access to the devices is not practical, the new software application cannot be uploaded using a traditional wired transmission (e.g., an interface cable).

In some computerized systems, the only practical option may be to upload the updated software application using an existing communication network. However, if the communications network has limited data transmission capabilities, it may be difficult to transmit the large amount of information (e.g., an entire software application). For example, a software application may be initially installed on a wireless mobile device (e.g., a cell phone or PDA). Typically, the device is issued to a user, who may travel or reside far from a software development center. The only method of communicating with the device may be over a wireless telecommunications network. However, due to bandwidth limitations on data transfer over the wireless network, an upload of the entire software application may not be economically feasible. Even if an upload of the application is possible, it may take an unacceptable amount of time due to the slow transfer rate of a wireless network (as compared to a dedicated wired transmission line or cable). These problems are further exacerbated if the computerized system includes a large number of wireless mobile devices, each requiring a separate application upload. Developing and testing separate applications for each mobile device can be time-consuming and economically infeasible. Additionally, if there are different versions of the software application distributed among a large number of mobile devices, a uniform software application update may be difficult to manage and track.

What is needed is a computerized system able to provide efficient modification of software applications that are distributed across a network of remote devices.

SUMMARY

A system including a terminal machine and a service provider machine is modified using a service provider machine. The terminal machine runs a terminal application. The terminal application is able to display a prompt in a first sequence of prompts and accept a user data entry in an associated first sequence of user data entries. The terminal application is comprised of a first set of computer-executable instructions and a first set of code. The service provider machine runs a provider application. The provider application is able to

receive the user data entry. The provider application is comprised of a second set of computer-executable instructions and a second set of code.

The update server machine is able to send a dialogue module to the terminal machine and the service provider machine. The dialogue module modifies the first and second set of code to produce a first and second set of updated code, respectively. The dialogue module does not modify the first or second set of computer-executable instructions.

The first set of updated code adapts the terminal application to use a second sequence of prompts and a second sequence of data entries. The second set of updated code adapts the provider application to use the second sequence of prompts and the second sequence of data entries.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIG. 1 illustrates a computerized system for updating a dialogue protocol by adapting applications on a terminal machine and a service provider machine.

FIG. 2 illustrates the use of a dialogue module in a computerized system.

FIG. 3A illustrates a process for updating a dialogue module on a terminal machine using an update server machine.

FIG. 3B illustrates a process for updating a dialogue module on a service provider machine using an update server machine.

FIG. 4A illustrates a dialogue sequence including a terminal machine and a service provider machine in a continuous communications mode.

FIG. 4B illustrates a dialogue sequence including a terminal machine and a service provider machine in a delayed communications mode.

FIG. 5A illustrates an example of a first prompt in a banking dialogue protocol.

FIG. 5B illustrates an example of a subsequent prompt in a banking dialogue protocol.

FIG. 6A illustrates an example of first prompt in a banking dialogue protocol.

FIG. 6B illustrates an example of a multiple option prompt in a banking dialogue protocol.

FIG. 6C illustrates an example of a data entry prompt in a banking dialogue protocol.

FIG. 7A illustrates an example of a first prompt in a medical dialogue protocol.

FIG. 7B illustrates an example of a subsequent prompt in a medical dialogue protocol.

FIG. 8A to 8B illustrate examples of a design tool for modifying a system dialogue protocol.

FIG. 9 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of a terminal machine.

FIG. 10 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of a service provider machine.

FIG. 11 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an update server machine.

FIG. 12 illustrates an exemplary logical communications packet structure.

The figures depict one embodiment of the present invention for purposes of illustration only. One skilled in the art will readily recognize from the following discussion that alternative embodiments of the structures and methods illustrated herein can be employed without departing from the principles of the invention described herein.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following embodiments describe a system capable of conducting a transaction between a user at a terminal machine

and a service provider at a second, remote machine. In some instances, the system can be used to facilitate a business transaction between a bank or financial institution (using a service provider machine) and a banking customer (using a terminal machine). The structure of the transaction may be custom tailored by adapting a dialogue protocol between at least two machines in the system. The dialogue protocol defines the contours of a transaction and includes various components such as: a sequence of dialogue prompts; a sequence of user data entry fields; and a set of dialogue parameters. Additionally, the dialogue protocol may define aesthetic features including the graphical user interface (GIU), display layout and GUI functionality. The dialogue protocol may be determined by the two software applications running on the two machines engaged in the transaction with the user.

The system described herein allows for the adaptation of a dialogue protocol through the modification of one or more software applications. Specifically, one or more of the software applications may be adapted by including or replacing a dialogue module, which includes a set of code. The code represents at least some information that must be translated by the software application before it can be implemented on the machine processor. In some embodiments, a developer may be able to generate an updated dialogue module as required in accordance with a particular dialogue protocol.

In a preferred embodiment, an updated dialogue module is able to be communicated from an update server machine to individual machine (e.g., devices) in the system, each machine having a software application. In a preferred embodiment, the dialogue module adapts at least one of the software applications to produce a modified dialogue protocol between the system components.

1. Dialogue Updates Using a Three-Node System

FIG. 1 depicts an exemplary computerized system for updating a dialogue protocol by adapting applications on a service provider machine 110 and a terminal machine 120. As described above, a transaction may be conducted between a user and the terminal machine 120 and the service provider machine 110. The transaction is conducted according to a dialogue protocol. The dialogue protocol may be changed by communicating a dialogue module 106 from the update server machine 102 to the service provider machine 110 and the terminal machine 120. As described below, the dialogue module 106 may include code that is unique to either the service provider machine 110 or the terminal machine 120. Although they are described separately, the service provider machine 110 and the update server machine 102 may or may not be on the same physical machine.

The system embodiment shown in FIG. 1 provides for communication between a service provider machine 110 and a terminal machine 120. As depicted in FIG. 1, the communication can be facilitated using a wireless communications network between the terminal machine wireless transceiver 124 and a wireless transceiver 114 in communication with the service provider machine 110. In some embodiments, the wireless communications network may be a CDMA or GSM telecommunications network capable of transmitting data between network users. Other components of the system such as wireless base stations, network links, network resource controllers and other components of the wireless communications network are not shown in FIG. 1. In alternative embodiments, the communication may also be transmitted over a wireless communications network that includes a wired network connection or a public switched telephone network (PSTN).

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As described above, a specialized communication or transaction occurs between a user and the terminal machine **120** and the service provider machine **110**. The transaction may be performed in accordance with a dialogue protocol. In one embodiment, the dialogue protocol is determined, at least in part, by the service provider application **112** (residing on the service provider machine **110**) and the terminal application **122** (residing on the terminal machine **120**). In a preferred embodiment, the dialogue protocol guides a user through a transaction or series of transactions with a service provider.

The system may conduct a transaction in a continuous communications mode, a delayed communications mode, and a mode that alternates between continuous and delayed communication modes. The mode depends on the availability, performance, or cost of the communication network between the terminal machine **120** and the service provider machine **110**.

A system operating in a continuous communications mode transmits and receives data between the terminal machine **120** and the service provider machine **110** at the same time or nearly the same time as a transaction is conducted between the user and a service provider. For example, data that is entered at the terminal machine **120** by a terminal user is typically transmitted to the service provider machine **110** before the user is prompted for additional input. The system may operate in a continuous communications mode if the communication network is available and can provide performance adequate to transfer data between prompts, without causing an appreciable delay in the transaction. One advantage to operating in a continuous communications mode is that transactional information sent by the service provider machine **110** is likely to be more current than if the transactional information had been previously stored on the terminal machine **120**.

A system operating in a delayed communications mode stores data input at the terminal machine **120** and transmits the data to a service provider machine **110** at a time that is after a transaction is completed between the user and service provider. For example, a series of prompts may be stored on the terminal machine **120** and used to collect a series of user inputs. The user inputs are stored and then transmitted to the service provider machine **110** at a later time. The system may operate in a delayed communications mode if the communication network is not accessible or reliable at the time of the transaction. An intermittent communications mode may also be used if the communication network is available, but it is advantageous to minimize the number of communications between the terminal machine **120** and the service provider machine **110**. Typically, the cost of data transmission over a communications network is lower when the number of transmissions is reduced. Operating in a delayed communications mode may also result in an improved system response because there is little or no delay due to data transmission over the communications network.

A system can also alternate between modes by operating a portion of the time in a continuous communications mode and a portion of the time in a delayed communications mode. For example, a series of data entries may be stored on the terminal machine **120** and then transmitted as a group to the service provider machine **110** before the transaction is complete. By alternating between communications modes, the system may reduce communications costs by minimizing the number of data transmissions. Alternating between communication modes also allows the service provider machine **110** to provide the terminal machine **120** with up-to-date transactional information.

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With regard to hardware components used communication using the wireless communications network, the service provider machine **110** may be in communication with a wireless transceiver **114**, which is able to send and receive data over the wireless communications network. In some embodiments, the wireless transceiver **114** is separate from the service provider machine **110**, and is in communication with the service provider machine **110** using a computer network connection. For example, in some embodiments, the wireless transceiver **114** may be part of a base station in a wireless communications network. In alternative embodiment, the wireless transceiver **114** is dedicated to the service provider machine **110** and/or is connected directly to the service provider machine **110**.

The service provider machine **110** also includes a service provider application **112** that is able to direct the service provider machine's portion of the dialogue protocol. Details regarding the service provider application are described in more detail in FIG. **2** below.

The terminal machine **120** may also include a wireless transceiver **124** able to send and receive data over the wireless communications network. The terminal machine **120** also includes a terminal application **122** that is able to direct the terminal machine's portion of the dialogue protocol. Additionally, the terminal machine **120** includes a user display **126** and a data entry device **128** for interacting with a system user. For example, the user display **126** may include a monitor or screen and the data entry device **128** may include a keypad or keyboard. See FIG. **9** for a more detailed description of the components of a terminal machine **120**.

Also depicted in FIG. **1**, the update server machine **102** communicates with the service provider machine **110** and the terminal machine **120** using the wireless communications network described above. The update server machine **102** may include a wireless transceiver **104** adapted for communication over the wireless communications network. In some embodiments, the wireless transceiver **104** is separate from the update server machine **102**, and is in communication with the update server machine **102** using a computer network connection.

The update server machine **102** also includes at least one dialogue module **106**. As discussed in more detail below, the dialogue module **106** may include portions of code and/or instructions that are able to modify the dialogue protocol between the terminal machine **120** and the service provider machine **110**. In a preferred embodiment, the dialogue module is less than 1 Mb to facilitate communication over a network with limited data transfer capacity.

FIG. **2** illustrates components of a computerized system used to update a dialogue protocol. In one embodiment, an update server machine **102** includes a terminal dialogue module **202** and a service provider dialogue module **206**. Each dialogue module **202**, **206** may include one or more portions of code or instructions. In this exemplary embodiment, the terminal dialogue module **202** includes terminal code **204** and the service provider dialogue module **206** includes service provider code **208**. In some embodiments, the terminal code **204** and the service provider code **208** are the same code.

A dialogue module may be communicated to individual components in the system. The embodiment in FIG. **2** depicts two components, a service provider machine **110** and a terminal machine **120**. A dialogue module **206** containing terminal code **208** is communicated to, and stored on, the terminal machine **120**. Likewise, a dialogue module **202** containing service provider code **204** is communicated to, and stored on, the service provider machine **110**.

In a preferred embodiment, the service provider machine 110 includes a service provider application 112. The service provider application includes a process or processes that allow the service provider machine 110 to conduct the service provider's portion of a dialogue sequence. See FIG. 4 for an example of a dialogue sequence including two machines in a system. In a preferred embodiment, the service provider application 112 includes a computer process for receiving data from a user and is able to update one or more records associated with a dialogue sequence. As shown in FIG. 2, the service provider application 112 may include a platform module 210, a set of computer-executable instructions 214, and service provider code 212.

In one embodiment, the platform module 210 is also a set of computer-executable instructions that is able to be executed or performed by a service provider machine's computer processor 1006 without additional translation or modification (see FIG. 10 for hardware components of a service provider machine 110). In one embodiment, the platform module 210 is able to interpret the service provider code 212 (stored on the service provider machine 110) so that the code is used when executing the service provider application 112. For example, in some embodiments, the platform module 210 is a virtual machine able to interpret service provider code 212, stored in the form of intermediate code (e.g., Java Byte Code). In other embodiments, the platform module 210 may be another type of executable or computer-executable code that is able to be executed or performed by a service provider machine's computer processor 1006. The platform module 210 may also utilize other computer-executable instructions 214 stored on the service provider machine 110. For example, the platform module may use other dynamically linked libraries or software components.

The service provider application 112 may also include library functions and custom functions that may be referenced by the service provider code 212. For example, in some embodiments, the service provider code 212 may make calls to library or custom functions associated with the service provider application 112.

Similarly, the terminal machine 120 includes a terminal application 122, which allows the terminal machine 120 to conduct the terminal's portion of a dialogue sequence. The terminal application 112 includes a platform module 220, a set of computer-executable instructions 224 and terminal code 222.

Both the service provider code 212 and the terminal code 222 may determine various features of the dialogue protocol including the substantive content of a dialogue sequence (e.g., a sequence of dialogue prompts and user data entries). The code may also determine portions of the graphical user interface presented on a user display. Various features of the dialogue protocol can be modified by downloading a different service provider code 204 and/or terminal code 208 from the update server machine 102.

2. Dialogue Module, Update Sequence

As described earlier, the dialogue protocol between components in a computerized system may be adapted by uploading a dialogue module. The steps in an exemplary update sequence for uploading a dialogue module to a terminal machine 120 are depicted in FIG. 3A. The following simplified embodiment describes the communication between an update server machine 102 and a terminal machine 120. However, a typical embodiment may include multiple terminal and service provider machines.

In step 332, the terminal machine 120 sends dialogue module version information to the update server machine 102. In some embodiments, the dialogue module version information

reflects the version of terminal code that is being used by a terminal application. The version information may be sent in response to an inquiry or request from the update server machine 102. In some embodiments, the dialogue version information may indicate that there is no terminal code currently saved on the terminal machine 120. In an alternative embodiment, the version information is already stored on the update server machine. For example, the version information may be included in a database associating version information with specific terminal machines.

In step 334, the dialogue module version information is received and stored by the update server machine 102. In some embodiments, the version information is associated with the terminal machine 120 and stored in a database including other version information associated with other terminal machines. In some embodiments, the database is used to identify terminal machines that require an updated dialogue module.

For example, a system administrator may specify that one or more terminal machines must support a particular dialogue protocol. The database may be queried by the update server machine 102 to determine which of the terminal machines, if any, currently support that particular dialogue protocol. For those terminal machines that do not support that particular dialogue protocol, the update server machine 102 may determine the dialogue module that is required to enable the particular dialogue protocol. For example, a dialogue module may be selected to provide features and functionality that the terminal device does not currently support.

In step 336, the update server machine 102 sends a dialogue module to the terminal machine 120. The dialogue module may include terminal code and other information to be used by the terminal application. In a preferred embodiment, the dialogue module includes modified terminal code that adapts the terminal application to perform a modified dialogue protocol with a service provider machine. In other embodiments, the dialogue module may include additional or new terminal code that, together with the existing terminal code, provides a specified functionality. In some embodiments, the dialogue module includes information in addition to the terminal code. For example, the dialogue module may include text files, version information or metadata identifying the content of the dialogue module.

In step 338, the dialogue module is received and stored by the terminal machine 120. In one embodiment, the dialogue module replaces existing terminal code already saved on the terminal machine 120. In other embodiments, there may not be any terminal code previously saved on the terminal machine 120. For example, the terminal code previously saved on the terminal machine may be an empty set of code. In some cases, the terminal code may supplement other code previously saved on the terminal machine 120.

The newly transferred terminal code is not compiled on the terminal machine 120. In some embodiments, the terminal code may be intermediate code in the form of Java Byte Code. As described earlier, the intermediate code may be interpreted by a platform module portion of the terminal application. In a preferred embodiment, computer-executable instructions or binary code comprising the platform module or other portions of the terminal application (previously stored on the terminal machine) is not deleted or replaced.

In step 340, the terminal machine 120 executes the terminal application. In a preferred embodiment, on execution, the terminal application uses the terminal code sent to the terminal machine 120 in step 336. The terminal code adapts the terminal application to perform a modified dialogue protocol with the service provider machine 110. The terminal applica-

tion is able to be executed without recompiling or replacing portions of the computer-executable instructions that are included in the platform module of the terminal application.

The steps in an exemplary update sequence for a service provider machine 110 are depicted in FIG. 3B. The following simplified embodiment describes the communication between an update server machine 102 and a service provider machine 110. However, other embodiments may include more than one service provider machine.

In step 352, the service provider machine 110 sends dialogue module version information to the update server machine 102. In some embodiments, the dialogue module version information reflects the version of service provider code that is being used by a service provider application. The version information may be sent in response to an inquiry or request from the update server machine 102. In some embodiments, the dialogue version information may indicate that there is no service provider code currently saved on the service provider machine 110. In an alternative embodiment, the version information is already stored on the update server machine. For example, the version information may be included in a database associating version information with specific service provider machines.

In step 354, the dialogue module version information is received and stored by the update server machine 102. In some embodiments, the version information is associated with the service provider machine 110 and stored in a database including other version information associated with other service provider machines. In some embodiments, the database is used to identify service provider machines that require an updated dialogue module.

For example, a system administrator may specify that one or more service provider machines must support a particular dialogue protocol. The database may be queried by the update server machine 102 to determine which of the service provider machines, if any, currently support that particular dialogue protocol. For those service provider machines that do not support that particular dialogue protocol, the update server machine 102 may determine the dialogue module that is required to enable the particular dialogue protocol. For example, a dialogue module may be selected to provide features and functionality that the terminal device does not currently support.

In step 356, the update server machine 102 sends a dialogue module to the service provider machine 110. The dialogue module may include service provider code and other information to be used by the service provider application. In a preferred embodiment, the dialogue module includes modified service provider code that adapts the service provider application to perform a modified dialogue protocol with a terminal machine. In other embodiments, the dialogue module may include additional or new service provider code that, together with the existing service provider code, provides a specified functionality. In some embodiments, the dialogue module includes information in addition to the service provider code. For example, the dialogue module may include text files, version information or metadata identifying the content of the dialogue module.

In step 358, the dialogue module is received and stored by the service provider machine 110. In one embodiment, the dialogue module replaces existing service provider code already saved on the service provider machine 110. In other embodiments, there may not be any service provider code previously saved on the service provider machine 110. In some cases, the service provider code may supplement other code previously saved on the service provider machine 110.

The newly transferred service provider code is not compiled on the service provider machine 110. In some embodiments, the service provider code may be intermediate code in the form of Java Byte Code. As described earlier, the intermediate code may be interpreted by a platform module portion of the service provider application. In a preferred embodiment, computer-executable instructions or binary code comprising the platform module or other portions of the service provider application (previously stored on the service provider machine) is not deleted or replaced.

In step 360, the service provider machine 110 executes the service provider application. In a preferred embodiment, on execution, the service provider application uses the service provider code sent to the service provider machine 110 in step 356. The service provider code adapts the service provider application to perform a modified dialogue protocol with a terminal machine 120. The service provider application is able to be executed without recompiling or replacing portions of the computer-executable instructions that are included in the platform module of the terminal application.

3. Dialogue Sequence Including a Terminal Machine and a Service Provider Machine

FIG. 4A depicts an exemplary dialogue sequence 400 including a terminal machine 120 and a service provider machine 110 communicating in a continuous mode. The dialogue sequence 400 may include a series of prompts and user data entries as part of an overall dialogue protocol between the terminal machine 120 and the service provider machine 110.

In step 402, the dialogue sequence 400 is initiated by a service provider machine 110. For example, the service provider machine 110 may send a command to the terminal machine 120 to begin a dialogue sequence. In other embodiments, the dialogue sequence 400 may be initiated by the terminal machine 120 or by the user of the terminal machine.

During the initiation of the dialogue sequence 400 one or more initial dialogue parameters may be specified. For example, the initial dialogue parameters may designate a transaction type, language preference, or user authorization code.

The dialogue protocol may require an authorization step at the beginning of the dialogue sequence 400. An authorization step verifies the identity of the user operating the terminal machine 120, and verifies that the user has permission to conduct the dialogue sequence 400. To verify the identity of the user, the system may require the user to input unique information that only the user may know, such as a password, personal identification number ("PIN"), or family name. Additionally or alternatively, the system may require a biometric identifier from a user, such as a fingerprint, eye retinal pattern, or voice signature. Other methods of identifying the user include identifying a device or item that are assumed to be in possession of the user. For example, the system may identify the terminal machine 120 by receiving a serial number, electronic network address, or other electronic data stored on the terminal machine 120. The system may also identify a credit card, smart card or ID card that is scanned into the terminal machine 120 using a card scanning device. The system can verify that the user has permission to conduct the dialogue sequence 400 by comparing the collected user information to a stored record of authorized users.

If the system is operating in a continuous communications mode, the system may require authorization from a service provider before completing a transaction between a user and the service provider. In this example, the authorization occurs

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at the beginning of the dialogue sequence **400**. However, the authorization may also occur during or at the end of the dialogue sequence.

In step **404**, the terminal machine **120** displays a first prompt in response to the dialogue sequence **400** being initiated. The type of prompt displayed may depend, in part, on the initial dialogue parameter. For example, the first prompt may be displayed in Spanish, if an initial dialogue parameter specifies that Spanish is the preferred language.

In step **406**, the terminal machine **120** accepts data entry input from the user. The data entry input may be any user driven input received from a data entry device **128** (see FIGS. **1** and **9**). For example, the data entry input can be one or more character strings entered using a keyboard or keypad. Alternatively, the data entry input may be the coordinates of a user selection corresponding to a location on a terminal display (e.g., a selection using computer mouse). The data entry input could also be an acknowledgement or button press from a data entry device on the terminal machine **120**.

In step **408**, information regarding the user data entry is transmitted to the service provider machine **110**. In this embodiment, the user data entry is sent after the data entry has been accepted by the terminal machine **120**. However, if the system is alternating between a continuous and delayed communications mode, the terminal machine may accept two or more data entries before sending the two or more data entries to the service provider machine. For example, the terminal machine **120** may wait until the user has completed a sequence of data entries associated with one transaction before sending the data entries to the service provider machine.

In step **410**, information regarding the user data entry is received by the service provider machine **110** and stored in memory. The user data entry may, in part, determine the second prompt in the dialogue sequence. The user data entry may also be used to signal other events or initiate other functionality of the dialogue protocol. As described above, in some embodiments the user data entry may also be received as two or more data entries.

In step **412**, a second prompt is initiated by the service provider machine. The initiation of the second prompt may include one or more subsequent dialogue parameters. Similar to the initial dialogue parameters described above, the subsequent dialogue parameters may include a transaction type, language preference, or authorization code. The subsequent dialogue parameter may also specify a subsequent prompt or series of prompts to be presented on the terminal display.

In step **414**, the terminal machine **120** displays a second prompt in response to the second prompt **412** being initiated by the service provider machine **110**. Similar to the process described above for steps **406**, **408** and **410**, the terminal machine **120** accepts a second data entry input, sends the second data entry input to the service provider machine **110**, which stores the second data entry input in memory.

The steps described above illustrate a simplified example of a dialogue sequence including a terminal machine and a service provider machine communicating in a continuous mode. Other embodiments include multiple prompts and multiple user data entries. In some embodiments a dialogue sequence includes one or more transactions with the user of the terminal machine.

FIG. **4B** depicts an exemplary dialogue sequence **420** including a terminal machine **120** and a service provider machine **120** communicating in a delayed communications mode. The dialogue sequence **420** may include a series of

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prompts and user data entries as part of an overall dialogue protocol between the terminal machine **120** and the service provider machine **110**.

In step **422**, a dialogue sequence is initiated by the terminal machine **120** or by the user of the terminal machine. During the initiation of a dialogue sequence one or more initial dialogue parameters may be specified. For example, the initial dialogue parameters may designate a transaction type, language preference, or user authorization code.

If the system is operating in a delayed communications mode, the system may require authorization from a service provider after completing the dialogue sequence **420**. If the dialogue sequence **420** represents a transaction, the authorization may not be performed until the transaction has been completed. In this case, the terminal machine **120** collects data associated with the transaction and stores it until it can be transmitted to the service provider machine **110**. The authorization with the service provider may occur after the transmission is complete.

In step **424**, the terminal machine **120** displays a first prompt in response to a dialogue sequence being initiated. As described above, the type of prompt displayed may depend, in part, on the initial dialogue parameter. In step **426**, the terminal machine **120** accepts data entry input from the user. The data is stored by the terminal machine **120** and associated with the first prompt displayed in step **424**.

Similarly, in step **428**, the terminal machine **120** displays a second prompt in the dialogue sequence **420**. The user data entry may, in part, determine the second prompt in the dialogue sequence. The data is stored by the terminal machine **120** and associated with the second prompt. This process is repeated until the dialogue sequence **420** is complete.

In step **430**, the combined user data is sent to the service provider machine **110**. As described above, in a delayed communications mode, the data may not be transmitted to the service provider machine **110** until a later time when a communication network is available. In some cases, a communications network is available, but the system transmits a group or series of user data entries to reduce network usage. In some cases, the series of prompts associated with the user data are also transmitted in step **430**. For example, FIG. **12** depicts an exemplary communications packet that contains a series of prompts and the associated user data.

The steps described above illustrate a simplified example of a dialogue sequence including a terminal machine and a service provider machine communicating in a delayed mode. As described above, a dialogue sequence may also be performed in a mode that alternates between continuous and delayed communication modes.

4. Logical Communications Packet

Communication between the terminal machine and the service provider machine may be performed using a communications packet. FIG. **12** depicts an exemplary communications packet **1202** that may be sent from a terminal machine to a service provider machine, which may start with a header element **1204** followed by a series of user data elements (**1206**, **1208**). In some embodiments, the user data elements (**1206**, **1208**) are associated with a series of prompts that are displayed on the terminal machine. Some prompts may simply provide information to the user without capturing any user data.

As shown in FIG. **12** the header element **1204** may include information including the size of the packet and the number of user data elements. The next element in the communications packet may be a user data element **1206** associated with prompt **1** followed by a user data element **1208** associated

with prompt 2. As described above, some prompts may have no user data and may include a null data set.

The dialogue module may specify the header of the communications packet, the size, and locations of the user data elements associated with each screen. This is a “logical” communications packet structure only, and the actual implementation of the communications packet may be different, for example to locate and/or encode the data from the different prompts more efficiently so as to reduce the size of the packet.

In some embodiments, a dialogue module may also define the structure of the communications packet that is communicated between the terminal machine and the service provider machine. New or modified dialogue protocols may require new or modified communications packets between the terminal machine and the service provider machine. For example, in some countries or regions an account may be associated with a person using two last names. In this case, the terminal machine application would have to be modified to accept two last names. The addition of the second last name will require the length of the communications packet to be increased. Also, the structure of the communications packet, including the addition of a new data field (e.g., the use of a second last name) would need to be specified to both the terminal machine and the service provider machine.

In some embodiments, a dialogue protocol may require that new or additional information be sent from the terminal machine to the service provider machine. For example, the number of prompts, the size of the data entries or the type of data entries may change. In this embodiment, the structure of the communications packet would be modified to accommodate new or additional information.

5. Examples of a Terminal Graphical User Interface

FIGS. 5A to 5B depict an example of a series of prompts that may be displayed in a dialogue sequence. This particular series of prompts may be used to guide a user through a banking transaction. These two exemplary prompts are only a portion of a series of prompts that guide a user through an entire transaction.

FIG. 5A depicts an initial prompt presented on a terminal machine display. In some embodiments, one or more initial dialogue parameters may have been used to specify the user’s name, the language preference and the type of authorization prompt required. Additionally, properties such as the text of the prompts, prompt sequence, and prompt display may be driven in part by either the terminal code, the service provider code, or both.

To continue to the next prompt, the user must enter an account number using the data entry device on the terminal machine. The initial prompt may also serve as a method of verifying the identity of the user by not allowing the transaction to continue unless a valid account number is entered.

FIG. 5B depicts an exemplary multiple selection prompt. The next prompt in the series may be partially dependent on the selection made by the user.

FIGS. 6A to 6C illustrate a second example of a series of prompts that may be displayed in a dialogue sequence as part of a dialogue protocol. In some embodiments, the series of prompts in FIGS. 6A to 6C are driven by an updated terminal code or service provider code. For example, a dialogue module may have been downloaded from an update server machine to either a terminal machine, a service provider machine, or both a terminal and a service provider machine. The newly downloaded code may direct, in part, the series of prompts to be displayed.

In FIG. 6A, an initial prompt is displayed greeting the user and requesting a bank account number. In some embodiments, one or more updated initial dialogue parameters may

have been used to specify the user’s name, the language preference and the type of authorization prompt required. Additionally, properties such as the text of the prompts, prompt sequence, and prompt display may be driven in part by either the terminal code, the service provider code, or both. The initial prompt may be driven, in part, by the newly downloaded code. However, the initial dialogue parameters may be the same as in the example of FIGS. 5A to 5B.

In FIG. 6B, a modified or alternate multiple selection prompt is presented on the terminal machine display. The user may select one of the options presented by making a selection on the terminal display or by entering the corresponding selection number. In this example, the user has selected option 1. FIG. 6C depicts a prompt that is displayed in response to the user’s previous selection.

FIGS. 7A to 7B depict a third example of a series of prompts that may be displayed in a dialogue sequence. The prompts in FIGS. 7A to 7B may be related to a medical provider transaction. In some embodiments, the sequence of prompts is driven by another dialogue module, downloaded from the update server machine.

5. Modifying the Dialogue Module Using a Design Tool

FIGS. 8A and 8B depict an example of a design tool that can be used to create or modify a dialogue module. As shown in FIG. 8, various features of the dialogue module can be specified. For example, the interface allows a designer to enter the text to be used for a given prompt. Translation of the text may also be provided depending on the languages supported by the dialogue module. Additionally, the designer can select the specific prompts and sequence of prompts to be presented to a terminal user. The designer may also specify the type of user data entry that will be accepted. In some embodiments, a custom or library function may also be specified for the dialogue module.

As shown in FIG. 8B, the design tool may allow the designer to specify the flow of screens. Each screen is a visual depiction of a prompt that is presented to on the terminal machine. The number and order of screens can be modified by the designer. For example, if the user presses the “1” button from this current screen the next screen will be number “0.” If the user presses the “ENTER” button from this current screen, then the next screen will be number “2.”

In some embodiments, the settings created using the design tool shown in FIGS. 8A and 8B are used to create or modify terminal code or service provider code. These portions of code may then be included in a dialogue module and downloaded to the appropriate machines in the system using an update server machine. In some embodiments, a version and/or a date may be associated with the code that is created or modified.

The screen shots depicted in FIGS. 8A and 8B are merely an example of a tool that can be used to generate a dialogue module. In the alternative, the dialogue module may be created or modified directly by changing the terminal or service provider code.

5. System Machines

FIGS. 9 to 11 depict exemplary embodiments of the machines used in one embodiment of a computerized system for updating a dialogue protocol. These embodiments are not intended to be limiting and the machines include additional elements not depicted.

FIG. 9 depicts an exemplary embodiment of a terminal machine 120. The terminal machine 120 includes a computer component 902 that includes at least one processor 906 and computer memory 904. The computer component 902 is able to communicate with persistent memory devices, such as disk storage 908 and a media drive 910. The media drive 910 is

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able to accept removable media **912** which may include one or more programs **914** or other stored instructions. The terminal machine **120** also includes a wireless transceiver **916** for communicating with a wireless network. In some embodiments, the wireless transceiver **916** is able to communicate with a CDMA or GSM telecommunications network.

The terminal machine **120** also includes a user display **920** and a data entry device **918**. In some embodiments the user display **920** is an LCD screen or similar device that is capable of displaying the user interface described above. In a preferred embodiment, the data entry device **918** may be a keypad, keyboard or other multi-button device. In some embodiments, the data entry device **918** includes other devices, such as a computer mouse or other pointing device. For example, the data entry device **918** can also include a touch screen device integrated with the user display **920**.

FIG. **10** depicts an embodiment of a service provider machine **110**. The service provider machine **110** includes a computer component **1002** that includes at least one processor **1006** and computer memory **1004**. The computer component **1002** is able to communicate with persistent memory devices, such as disk storage **1008** and a media drive **1010**. The media drive **1010** is able to accept removable media **1012**, which may contain one or more programs **1014** or other stored instructions. The service provider machine **110** also includes a network connection **1016**. The network connection **1016** may include a TCP/IP wired connection and/or a wireless device, such as a wireless modem. Through the network connection **1016**, the service provider machine **110** is able to communicate with a wireless transceiver **1018**. In some embodiments, the service provider machine **110** is networked directly with the wireless transceiver **1018**. In other embodiments, the service provider machine **110** is connected to a wireless transceiver **1018** through an external network (not shown). For example, the service provider machine **110** may connect to the Internet or other telephony network to access a wireless transceiver that is part of a telecommunications network. In this embodiment, the wireless transceiver may be a base station in a telecommunications network. In some embodiments, the wireless transceiver **1018** is able to communicate with a CDMA or GSM telecommunications network.

FIG. **11** depicts an embodiment of an update server machine **102**. The update server machine **102** includes a computer component **1102** that includes at least one processor **1106** and computer memory **1104**. The computer component **1102** is able to communicate with persistent memory devices, such as disk storage **1108** and a media drive **1110**. The media drive **1110** is able to accept removable media **1112**, which may contain one or more programs **1114** or other stored instructions. The update server machine **102** also includes a network connection **1116**. The network connection **1116** may include a TCP/IP wired connection and/or a wireless device, such as a wireless modem. Through the network connection **1116**, the update server machine **102** is able to communicate with a wireless transceiver **1118**. In some embodiments, update server machine **102** is networked directly with the wireless transceiver **1118**. In other embodiments, the update server machine **102** is connected to a wireless transceiver **1118** through an external network (not shown). For example, the update server machine **102** may connect to the Internet or other telephony network to access a wireless transceiver that is part of a telecommunications network. In this embodiment, the wireless transceiver may be a base station in a telecommunications network. In some

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embodiments, the wireless transceiver **1118** is able to communicate with a CDMA or GSM telecommunications network.

Although only certain exemplary embodiments of this invention have been described in detail, those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that many modifications are possible in the exemplary embodiments without materially departing from the novel aspects of the described embodiments. For example, aspects of embodiments disclosed above can be combined in other combinations to form additional embodiments. Accordingly, all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of this invention.

I claim:

1. A method of conducting a dialogue between a terminal machine and a service provider machine, the method comprising:

displaying a prompt, of a first sequence of prompts, on a terminal display of the terminal machine by running a terminal application, the terminal application comprising a first set of computer-executable instructions and a first set of code that conduct the terminal machine's portion of the dialogue;

accepting a data entry, of a first sequence of data entries, using the terminal machine, wherein the first sequence of data entries is associated with the first sequence of prompts;

communicating information over a wireless network from the terminal machine to the service provider machine, the information regarding the first sequence of data entries; the service provider machine using a provider application, the provider application comprising a second set of computer-executable instructions and a second set of code that conduct the service provider machine's portion of the dialogue; and

receiving, at the terminal machine, a terminal dialogue module over a wireless network, from an update server machine, wherein the terminal dialogue module modifies the first set of code to produce a first set of updated code, wherein the first set of updated code adapts the terminal application, to use a second sequence of prompts and a second sequence of data entries for the terminal machine's portion of a modified dialogue sequence with the service provider machine, wherein the terminal dialogue module does not modify the first set of computer-executable instructions; wherein the service provider machine receives, over the wireless network from the update server machine, a provider dialogue module that modifies the second set of code to produce a second set of updated code, wherein the second set of updated code adapts the provider application, to use the second sequence of prompts and the second sequence of data entries for the service provider machine's portion of the modified dialogue sequence with the terminal machine, wherein the provider dialogue module does not modify the second set of computer-executable instructions.

2. A system for modifying a terminal machine and a service provider machine, the system comprising:

an update server machine comprising a processor and operable for sending a terminal dialogue module to the terminal machine and a provider dialogue module to the service provider machine to allow the terminal machine and the service provider machine to conduct a dialogue sequence with each other;

wherein the terminal machine is configured to run a terminal application that conducts the terminal machine's portion of the dialogue sequence with the service pro-

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vider machine, the terminal application operable for displaying a prompt in a first sequence of prompts and accepting a user data entry in an associated first sequence of user data entries, wherein the terminal application comprises a first set of computer-executable instructions and a first set of code, wherein the first set of computer-executable instructions are able to execute directly on a terminal processor of the terminal machine, and wherein the first set of code is not able to execute directly on the terminal processor;

wherein the service provider machine is configured to run a provider application that conducts the service provider machine's portion of the dialogue sequence with the terminal machine, the provider application operable for receiving the user data entry, wherein the provider application comprises a second set of computer-executable instructions and a second set of code, wherein the second set of computer-executable instructions are able to execute directly on a provider processor of the service provider machine, and wherein the second set of code is not able to execute directly on the provider processor; and

wherein the terminal dialogue module modifies the first set of code to produce a first set of updated code, wherein the provider dialogue module modifies the second set of code to produce a second set of updated code, wherein the terminal dialogue module does not modify the first set of computer-executable instructions and wherein the provider dialogue module does not modify the second set of computer-executable instructions, wherein the first set of updated code adapts the terminal application to use a second sequence of prompts and a second sequence of data entries for the terminal machine's portion of a modified dialogue sequence with the service provider machine, and wherein the second set of updated code adapts the provider application to use the second sequence of prompts and the second sequence of data entries for the service provider machine's portion of the modified dialogue sequence with the terminal machine.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the terminal processor and the provider processor are different types of processors, wherein the first set of computer-executable instructions are not able to be executed on the provider processor, and wherein the second set of computer-executable instructions are not able to be executed on the terminal processor.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the first and second sets of computer-executable instructions are fully compiled machine code.

5. The system of claim 2, wherein the first and second sets of code and the first and second sets of updated code include code that is Java Byte code.

6. The system of claim 2, wherein the first and second sets of updated code further adapt the terminal application and the provider application to use a custom graphical user interface.

7. The system of claim 2, wherein the terminal dialogue module further comprises a first custom function and wherein the provider dialogue module further comprises a second custom function, the first custom function and the second custom function each comprising computer-executable instructions.

8. The system of claim 2, wherein either the first set or the second set of code is an empty set of code.

9. The system of claim 2, wherein the update server machine stores a version identification information related to the dialogue module.

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10. The system of claim 2, wherein the service provider machine and the update server machine are the same machine.

11. The system of claim 2, wherein a portion of the terminal dialogue module is sent to the terminal machine.

12. The system of claim 2, wherein a portion of the provider dialogue module is sent to the service provider machine.

13. The system of claim 2, wherein at least one of the terminal machine and the service provider machine is a cellular phone.

14. The system of claim 2, wherein the terminal machine is a point-of-sale terminal.

15. The system of claim 2, wherein the update server machine is adapted to select the terminal dialogue module and the provider dialogue module from a plurality of dialogue modules.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the terminal dialogue module is selected based on the identification of the user.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein the terminal dialogue module is selected based on the input/output (I/O) capabilities of the terminal machine.

18. The system of claim 15, wherein the terminal dialogue module and the provider dialogue module are selected based on version identification information related to the first set and the second set of code, respectively.

19. The system of claim 2, wherein either the first set or the second set of updated code further adapts the second set of prompts to use a different language.

20. The system of claim 2, wherein the terminal and provider dialogue modules are compressed using a compression algorithm.

21. The system of claim 2, wherein the update server machine is adapted to send the terminal and provider dialogue modules using a wireless network.

22. The system of claim 2, wherein the provider application is further adapted to send return data to the terminal machine.

23. The system of claim 22, wherein the return data includes promotional information.

24. The system of claim 22, wherein the return data includes information related to a completed transaction.

25. The system of claim 2, wherein the either the first set or the second set of modified code modifies a logical structure associated with a communications packet, the communications packet adapted to communicate at least one data entry from the terminal machine to the service provider machine.

26. The system of claim 2, wherein the first sequence of prompts is related to a banking transaction.

27. The system of claim 2, wherein the first sequence of prompts is related to an insurance transaction.

28. The system of claim 2, wherein the first sequence of prompts is related to a healthcare transaction.

29. A system for updating a terminal machine user and a service provider to allow the terminal machine and the service provider machine to conduct a dialogue with each other, the system comprising:

an update server machine comprising a processor and adapted to communicate with:

a terminal machine operable for running a terminal application that conducts the terminal machine's portion of the dialogue with the service provider machine, the terminal application operable for displaying a prompt in a first sequence of prompts and accepting a user data entry in a first sequence of user data entries, wherein the terminal application comprises a first set of computer-executable instructions and a first set of code; and

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a service provider machine operable for running a provider application that conducts the service provider machine's portion of the dialogue with the terminal machine, the provider application operable for receiving the user data entry, wherein the provider application comprises a set of a second set of computer-executable instructions and a second set of code; wherein the update server machine is able to send a terminal dialogue module to the terminal machine and a provider dialogue module to the service provider machine,

wherein the terminal dialogue module modifies the first set of code to produce a first set of updated code, wherein the terminal dialogue module does not modify the first set of computer-executable instructions, wherein the first set of updated code adapts the terminal application to use a second sequence of prompts and a second sequence of data entries for the terminal machine's portion of a modified dialogue sequence with the service provider machine; and wherein the provider dialogue module modifies the second set of code to produce a second set of updated code, wherein the provider dia-

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logue module does not modify the second set of computer-executable instructions, wherein the second set of updated code adapts the provider application to use the second sequence of prompts and the second sequence of data entries for the service provider machine's portion of a modified dialogue sequence with the terminal machine.

30. The system of claim **29**, wherein the update server machine further comprises: a database system that includes: a terminal version identification information related to the first set of code stored on the terminal machine; and a provider version identification information related to the second set of code stored on the service provider machine.

31. The system of claim **30**, wherein the update server machine is further adapted to:

- send a dialogue module to the terminal machine based on the terminal version identification information; and
- send a dialogue module to the service provider machine based on the provider version identification information.

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